

REMARKS

This case has been carefully reviewed and analyzed in view of the Office Action dated 7 March 2005. Responsive to that Office Action, Claim 6 is now canceled from this case; Claim 1 is amended; and, Claims 9-12 are newly-inserted for further prosecution with the other pending Claims. It is believed that with such amendments to the Claims, there is a further clarification of their recitations.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-2, 6, and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by the Tuli reference. The Examiner also rejected Claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tuli in view of the Massimo reference. In setting forth this rejection, the Examiner acknowledged that the Tuli reference fails to disclose a scale ruler on its transparent platen 5, but cited Massimo for disclosing this feature, concluding that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have modified Tuli's device accordingly.

As newly-amended and newly-inserted independent Claims 1 and 12 each now more clearly recites, Applicant's fingerprint identification apparatus includes among its combination of features a "contact image sensor (CIS) module" and a "keyswitch" which may be actuated by the user for "relative movement" with respect to the CIS module. The keyswitch includes a transparent plate which is "disposed immediately adjacent [the] CIS module," such that it "maintain[s] direct optical coupling" therewith, as each of the independent Claims 1 and 12 also now more clearly recites.

Newly-inserted independent Claim 12 additionally recites among its combination of features "a base including at least one guiding shaft," to which the CIS module and

keyswitch are coupled. As the Claim further recites, the keyswitch includes “at least one sliding part extending from said transparent plate to coaxially engage said guiding shaft in slidable manner.”

The full combination of features now more clearly recited by each of the independent Claims 1 and 12 is nowhere disclosed by the cited references. Note in this regard that Tuli incorporates much of the cumbersome and costly optics which Applicant’s claimed apparatus specifically obviates. Tuli does provide for solid state reading elements 7 which may in fact “be in the form of a CCD... or contact image sensor integrated circuits,” (column 7; lines 20-21). Nonetheless, the reference also prescribes for each of its numerous embodiments a Selfoc optic fiber lens array 6 disposed physically between the sensor array element 7 and transparent platen 5 to effect light focusing onto the element 7. This is an essential part of the image reading “enhancement” that Tuli seeks to provide.

This teaches quite actively away from a transparent plate and CIS module being “disposed immediately adjacent” one another, and from their “maintain[ing] direct optical coupling” with one another - as each of the pending independent Claims 1 and 12 now more clearly recites. Indeed, the very provision of intervening optics between the platen 5 and elements 7 is a main thrust of Tuli’s teachings.

Given such contrary teachings of the primarily-cited Tuli reference, the disclosures of the Massimo reference are found to be quite ineffectual to the present patentability analysis. That reference is merely directed to a latent fingerprint lifting

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mechanism which incorporates no CIS module, much less with the structural features recited by Applicant's pending Claims.

It is respectfully submitted, therefore, that the cited Tuli and Massimo references fail to disclose the unique combination of features now more clearly recited by Applicant's pending Claims for the purposes and objectives disclosed in the subject Patent Application. The other references cited by the Examiner but not used in the rejection are found to be further remote from Applicant's claimed apparatus when patentability considerations are taken properly into account.

It is now believed that the subject Patent Application has been placed fully in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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